

ARNOLD LOPEZ

SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER | CHESS-NATIVE PRODUCT FOUNDER

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PRODUCT PORTFOLIO [chessotb.club](#) | [nexused.io](#) | [worldnexus.dev](#)

PRODUCT PROFILE

Chess-native, AI-native product founder and systems leader with 8+ years designing user-centered products, programs, and operating models. Built ChessOTB.Club from concept to 500+ users and 60+ social chess clubs within one year, owning discovery, product strategy, prioritization, prototyping, launch, onboarding, and iteration. Brings hands-on consumer product judgment, technical fluency, field research, data-informed decision-making, and cross-functional leadership.

CHESSOTB 500+ users | 60+ social chess clubs | 5 live product areas | 5 tournament formats
OPERATING IMPACT +220% milestone-completion efficiency | +200% alumni engagement

PRODUCT Vision and roadmaps; discovery; prioritization; requirements and user flows; experimentation and metrics; activation, engagement, retention; onboarding and go-to-market.
TECHNICAL AI-assisted prototyping; React and TypeScript; FastAPI; REST APIs; data models; public-data pipelines; Git and GitHub.
CHESS Chess.com product ecosystem; tournament formats and pairing; ratings; club operations; player preparation; leagues; creator and community experiences.
LEADERSHIP Concise asynchronous decision writing; stakeholder alignment; team leadership; partnerships; field operations; executive communications.

PRODUCT LEADERSHIP

Founder & CEO | Product Lead 2025 - Present

ChessOTB.Club | *San Diego, CA* | [chessotb.club](#)

- Built and scaled an over-the-board chess platform from concept to 500+ users and 60+ social chess clubs within its first year; own the full product lifecycle from field discovery and roadmap decisions through prototyping, QA, launch, support, and continuous iteration.
- Shipped five live product areas: a tournament engine supporting five formats, Chess Club Management System, Matchup Prep, Repertoire Builder, and Chess Club Leagues.
- Designed chess-native workflows, including Chess.com rating integration, across event setup, pairing, club operations, competitive preparation, learning, and recurring league play, balancing simple UX with the accuracy required for tournament operations.
- Onboard and support a portfolio of 60+ social chess clubs using the product in weekly operations, creating a direct feedback loop for issue triage, feature prioritization, and release validation.
- Developed a phased national OTB growth roadmap using the existing club network as infrastructure for creator-led club tours and a flagship social-club competition.

Founder & CEO | Product Strategy Jan 2024 - Present

Nexus | Nexused.io and WorldNexus.dev | *San Diego, CA*

- Created Nexused.io first as an AI-native college-to-career product that translates coursework, projects, experiences, and labor-market evidence into skills, career pathways, and personalized next-step guidance.
- Expanded the product thesis into WorldNexus.dev, a systems-intelligence platform mapping education, employment, and economic data for students, institutions, employers, funders, and regional planners.
- Own 0-to-1 product strategy, stakeholder discovery, information architecture, UX, AI-assisted prototyping, data-source selection, and roadmap tradeoffs; translate competing cross-sector needs into shared ontologies and role-specific workflows.
- Built and tested working prototypes across React and TypeScript, FastAPI, REST APIs, and public-data pipelines drawing on O*NET, BLS, IPEDS, College Scorecard, and WEF.

CURRENT CROSS-SECTOR LEADERSHIP

Manager of Development, Workforce Innovation Jun 2026 - Present

STEM Advantage | *Los Angeles / San Diego, CA*

- Lead an integrated Classroom-to-Boardroom operating model connecting AI literacy, mentorship, alumni engagement, employer partnerships, institutional collaboration, and measurable student outcomes.
- Translate labor-market trends, program evidence, and stakeholder needs into partner strategy, funder narratives, executive communications, and implementation plans.
- Coordinate students, CSU campuses, employers, alumni, funders, and community partners around shared priorities for first-generation and underserved STEM students.

CROSS-SECTOR LEADERSHIP & RESEARCH

Senior Director of Workforce Innovation

First Gen Scholars | San Diego, CA

May 2024 - Dec 2025

- Led organization-wide workforce innovation for first-generation college students, turning learner needs, labor-market signals, and employer demand into career services and opportunity pipelines.
- Owned service design across individualized pathway planning, resume development, interviewing, networking, alumni career support, and continuous improvement.
- Built employer and community partnerships and integrated emerging technology and industry trends into program strategy.

Researcher

The Project on Workforce at Harvard University | Riverland Community College | Remote / Minnesota

Jul 2024 - Dec 2024

- Led applied research on labor-market information and technology in academic program design to improve student outcomes and economic mobility.
- Managed relationships with college leaders, state agencies, and industry partners; conducted stakeholder interviews, site visits, desk research, and data and technology audits.
- Synthesized findings into strategic plans and case-study outputs identifying effective practices and product, process, and partnership opportunities.

Regional Manager, Alumni Engagement

The Hidden Genius Project | Oakland, CA

Sep 2019 - Mar 2024

- Managed and developed a national team of six; built an internal operating system in Asana and Monday.com that increased milestone-completion efficiency by 220%.
- Designed and led a College & Career Development Program whose participants achieved a 98% high-school graduation rate and 90% postsecondary matriculation rate.
- Managed a national platform connecting 250+ alumni, staff, and partners and delivered 50+ programs, contributing to a 200% increase in alumni engagement over four years.
- Launched career-pathway programs in venture capital, cybersecurity, and 3D design and used outcomes data to improve services for more than 200 alumni.

College Adviser

University of California, Berkeley | Berkeley, CA

Jul 2019 - Jun 2021

- Built a college-going culture at a new partner site and delivered personalized advising for students navigating postsecondary planning.
- Designed and implemented a virtual advising curriculum for 100+ college-access professionals, improving program consistency and expanding service delivery.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Teacher, Costanoa Continuation High School (2018 - 2019) | Project Manager, UC Graduate Student Commons (2017 - 2018)

EDUCATION

M.Ed., Education Leadership, Organizations, and Entrepreneurship Harvard University	2022
Master of Business Administration (MBA) MIT Sloan School of Management	2021
Certificate, Student Affairs and Higher-Education Administration UC Berkeley Extension	2021
B.A., Sociology and Education UC Santa Cruz	2019
A.A., Sociology Southwestern College	2015

SELECTED LEADERSHIP

CEO Advisory Board Member, California Representative | College Advising Corps, 2020 - 2021 | Represented 900+ advisers and co-led a national summit for approximately 1,000 professionals.